



Survey Brief: A Survey of First-Time Recipients

Iowa Teacher Shortage Loan Forgiveness Program

Iowa College Student Aid Commission

The Iowa College Student Aid Commission (Iowa College Aid) conducted a survey of first-time recipients of the Iowa Teacher Shortage Loan Forgiveness Program in the 2015-16 academic year. Results indicate that while the program plays only a small role in most teachers' initial decision to enter the profession of teaching or to work in an instructional shortage area, the program does influence working teachers' decision to live and work in Iowa.

Program Overview:

The Iowa Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program provides licensed Iowa teachers working in instructional shortage areas with assistance in repaying outstanding federal Stafford loans. Iowa College Aid administers the program, which was established in 2007. Instructional shortage areas are designated annually by the Iowa Department of Education. The program is funded by General Fund appropriations, with additional financial support provided through a separate fund. In 2015-16, the program provided \$692,171 in loan repayment assistance to 126 Iowa teachers. The average program award was \$5,493. Eligible teachers receive funding for up to 5 years, as long as program eligibility criteria continue to be met.

Survey:

In August of 2016, Iowa College Aid surveyed first-time recipients of the program to assess whether and in what ways Iowa Teacher Loan Forgiveness influences teachers' decisions about working in Iowa in instructional shortage areas. The agency sent the survey to 58 first-time recipients and received 38 responses (65.5%). Respondents, on average, had been teaching for a little over four years prior to the 2015-16 academic year (the median amount of time spent teaching prior to the 2015-16 academic year was 3 years).

Summary of Findings:

- Most respondents (23) became aware of the program after completing college (60.53%). Of the fifteen respondents that learned about the availability of the program prior to completing college:
 - Seven (46.67%) indicated that the program influenced their decisions to major in education; and,
 - Six (40%) indicated that the program influenced their decisions to teach in shortage areas.
- Of the thirty-eight respondents, seventeen (44.74%) indicated that they have considered teaching in a state other than Iowa.
 - Of the seventeen respondents that have considered teaching in a state other than Iowa, fourteen (82.35%) indicated that the program influenced their decisions to teach in Iowa.
- The Iowa College Aid website and/or Iowa College Aid promotional materials were the most cited sources that informed survey respondents about the existence of the program.